

or to play with his fellow-dogs. Patrasche was very happy.

Fortunately for his peace, his former owner was killed in a drunken brawl at the Kerminse of Meehlin,¹ and so sought not after him nor disturbed him in his new and well-loved home.

A few years later, old Jehan Daas, who had always been a cripple, became so paralyzed with rheumatism that it was impossible for him to go out with the cart any more. Then little Nello, being now grown to his sixth year of age, and knowing the town well from having accompanied his grandfather so many times, took his place beside the cart, and sold the milk and received the coins in exchange, and brought them back to their respective owners with a pretty grace and seriousness which charmed all who beheld him.

The little Ardennois was a beautiful child, with dark, grave, tender eyes, and a lovely bloom upon his face, and fair locks that clustered to his throat; and many an artist sketched the group as it went by him, — the green cart with the brass flagons of Teniers² and Mieris³ and Van Tal,⁴ and the great tawny-colored, massive dog, with his belled harness that chimed cheerily as he went, and the small figure that

¹ **Meehlin.** A city of Belgium, about 13 miles from Brussels. It was formerly celebrated for its lace industry.

² **Teniers.** There were two celebrated Flemish painters of this name, David Teniers, the Elder (1582-1649), and David Teniers, the Younger, (1610-1690).

³ **Mieris.** There are three Dutch painters of this name, Franz van Mieris, the Elder (1635-1681), Franz van Mieris, the Younger (1689-1763), and Willem van Mieris (1662-1747).

⁴ **Van Tal.** A Flemish painter contemporary with the Mieris.